

# gulf solidarity

## Bulletin on Oman and the Gulf

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## EDITORIAL: OMAN, THE TIDE WILL TURN AGAIN

Supporters of the Omani revolution have had to adjust to the changed situation in Oman. Until 1974, when the Iranian invasion began to have a serious effect on the liberated areas, it was sufficient for us to explain to the public that the Omani people, under the leadership of the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO), had liberated over 90% of the southern province of Dhofar and had begun organization and armed struggle in the North. It is easy to spread good news; everyone wants to hear it.

But now the tasks of supporters are not so simple. The revolution has met setbacks and some defections which it would serve no purpose to hide. Our job now is not to spread false claims of victory after easy victory but to explain that the revolution is a process which continues to unfold.

Like all social processes, the Omani revolution has ups and downs — like the crests and troughs of ocean waves that nonetheless break and reach the shore. Let us briefly recall that the Bolshevik revolution went through a lull after the unsuccessful 1905 revolution. Lenin told his wife, "I do not know whether I'll live to see the next rise of the tide."\* Yet the Bolsheviks adjusted their strategy, not once but many times, and won a literally earth-shaking victory in 1917.

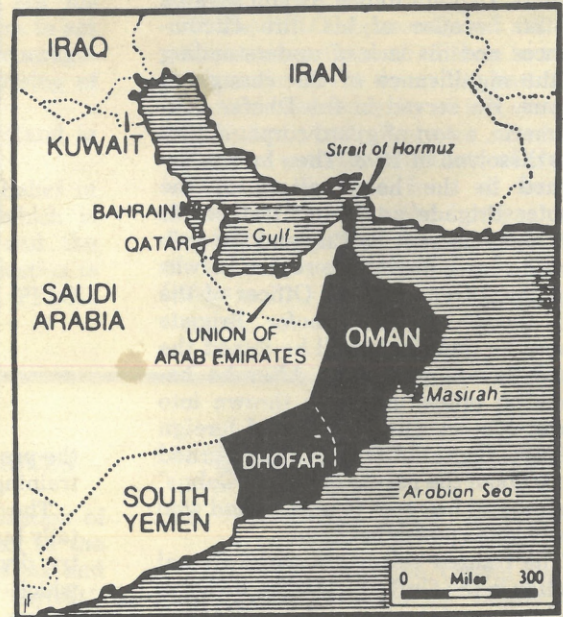
The Chinese Communist Party was viciously attacked in 1927 and suffered other major setbacks before victory in 1949. How many western journalists reported their demise during the Long March? In Vietnam, armed struggle entirely ceased between the 1954 Geneva accords and 1960 when the National Liberation Front began the final phase of armed struggle leading up to the victory in 1975.

The Omani revolution suffered a big defeat in 1959 and met great difficulties between 1965 and 1967. But from 1968 to 1974 the revolution, benefitting from sound analysis of past mistakes, advanced.

The present strategy of the Omani revolution is to strengthen the organization of the Omani people so that the next rise of the tide can bring more decisive victories. The key tasks the Omanis have set for themselves are organization and education on a mass scale.

\*N.K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin* (New York, 1970), p. 233.

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## MASS MOVEMENT IN IRAN

In the past few months, Iranian workers, peasants, shanty-town dwellers, students, and progressive clergy have staged an unprecedented campaign of massive demonstrations around the country. Fueled by a 30% inflation rate and average wages near \$2.00 per day, the Iranian people's conditions have rapidly deteriorated. Food in Iran is now more expensive than in New York. Over one million urban families lack housing and many shelters are makeshift. But even these shacks have been systematically bulldozed to benefit a handful of land speculators allied with the Shah's regime.

Many militant strikes have flared up with workers increasingly fighting the police. In August 1977 workers struck the Plasco plant and the brickmaking factories. The Revolutionary armed organizations distributed leaflets about these strikes. Later Pars Toshiba, General Motors, Ferdos shoe factory, and Shiraz petrochemical factory were also struck.

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# QABUS ARMY OFFICER JOINS PFLO

Captain Rabee Awadh Juma'an Marzooq, a former staff member of the Sallalah Brigade in the army of Sultan Qabus, recently joined the PFLO. Captain Rabee Awadh told the PFLO he became convinced that the Sultan's puppet regime is no more than a feeble instrument of Britain and its foreign allies.

Captain Rabee Awadh joined Qabus' army during the first week after Qabus replaced his father, Sultan Said bin Taimur. Captain Rabee Awadh says he did so because of his dire circumstances and his lack of understanding of the significance of the change to Qabus. He served in the Dhofar gendarmerie, a sort of guard corps, until it was dissolved in 1973. Then he was assigned to the headquarters of the Dhofar Brigade as a staff trainee. In 1975 he was sent to England for a 7-month course and on his return he was appointed General Staff Officer of the 3rd Degree in the Dhofar Brigade where he remained until he joined the revolution in mid-1977. After he became an officer and was thrown into closer contact with British and foreign officers, Captain Rabee Awadh learned more about the nature of Sultan Qabus' regime and he came to understand who really holds power in Oman.

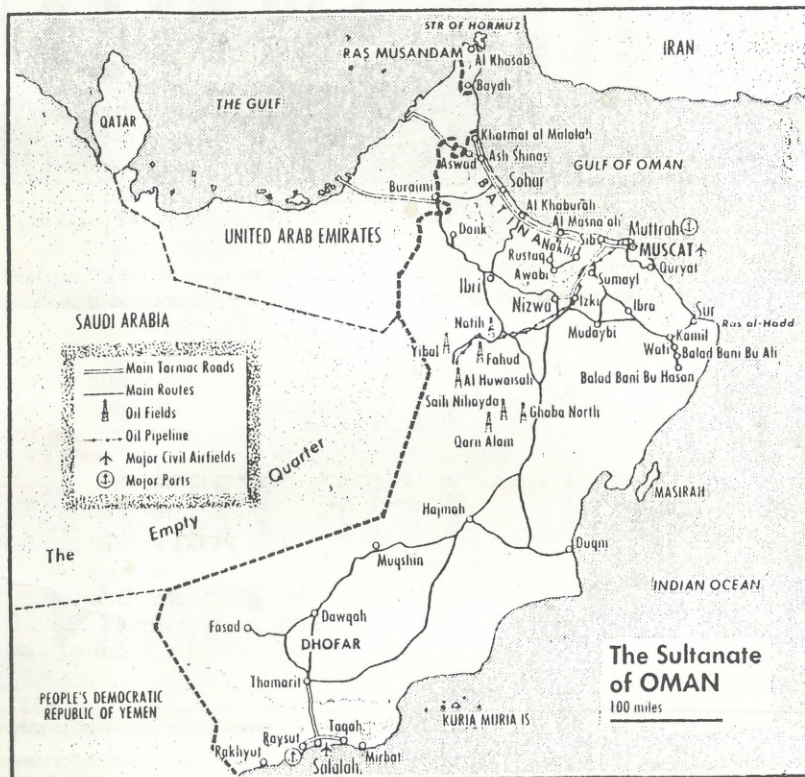
The Iranian seizure of three Omani islands in the Gulf, the Iranian invasion of Oman, and the recent gift of Masirah island to the United States increased his anger to the point that he decided to join PFLO. Captain Rabee Awadh then outlined the structure of the Sultan's army and the foreign presence in Oman to back up his charges.

## SULTAN'S ARMY

The Sultan's army has three main forces: land, air (Sultan of Oman's Air Force—SOAF), and naval (Sultan of Oman's Navy—SON). The rank-and-file is slightly less than 50% Omani; the rest are mostly Baluchi, about 40%, not including those Baluchis who have become Omani citizens. The remaining 10% are mostly British, Pakistani, and Indian.

Omanis hold no key positions of influence. The army commander is British, appointed by the British Defence Ministry. Commanders of the navy, air force, and Dhofar Brigade are also British. Staff officers are British, Pakistani, and Indian.

A few infantry commands have been turned over to Omani officers chosen not for military skill but for loyalty to the British. Every Omani officer with an infantry command has a British deputy with full authority to relay orders to the Omani "commander" on



the pretext that the Omani is still under training.

The Sultan's forces are difficult to tally but in Dhofar there are four infantry divisions (the Dhofar Brigade) of which two operate in the Western region. Smaller units include guard units, the Royal Guard, and the *firqa*. The *firqa* are estimated at about 600 men, operating in small, tribally-organized groups of 30-50 men. Every *firqa* has two officers, one of whom is British and holds command. All together there are probably over 5,000 men in the Sultan's armed forces.

## BRITISH FORCES

In Oman and particularly Dhofar, British air, naval, and land forces operate from Masirah island, Sallalah air base, and with the local army. Masirah's airbase was supposed to be turned over to Omani forces by the British but British personnel still remain. Actually Masirah is being turned over to the US. At the RAF-controlled Sallalah base, the name of the British force there was simply changed to SOAF while signs indicating the British presence have been replaced by others indicating the presence of the Sultan's forces.

The British forces also include the SAS (Special Air Service) commando unit which trains and directs the Sultan's army and the *firqa*. The SAS unit numbers about 500 in Dhofar under the name of BATT (British Army Training Team). These highly trained

commandos were used in Greece, Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, South Yemen, and Ireland.

The British have several field artillery batteries, an engineering battalion, a Sound Ranging Battery, and the so-called 2nd Information Team (2IT) also known as Psychological Operations or Psyops. The Sound Ranging Battery uses sophisticated equipment to locate PFLO artillery and mortar positions. Psyops runs the "hearts and minds" campaign with pamphlets and a radio station.

Nearly 800 British officers train and administer the Sultan's army along with about 500 others from Australia, India, Pakistan, and Ceylon. Almost 150 pilots and administrative officers, mostly British Ceylonese, and Australian, work in the SOAF in addition to nearly 50 British officers who run the air network, i.e. Anglo-French Jaguar planes and anti-aircraft Rapier missiles. About 200 British, Pakistani, and Indian naval officers work in the SON; some are seconded and others are on contract. The number of British is decreasing in the navy but they still hold key command positions.

## IRANIAN AND JORDANIAN FORCES IN OMAN

Iranian land, air, and naval forces presently occupy several parts of Oman, particularly the southern province of Dhofar. Near the border with



# QABUS THREATENS EMIRATE

The army of Sultan Qabus of Oman, backed up by British and Iranian forces, has massed near Oman's border with the Emirate of Ras al-Khaimah, one of the members of the United Arab Emirates. Qabus intends to annex part of Ras al-Khaimah's territory by force. The territory in question is adjacent to the area of Ras al-Jibal, along the coast of the Gulf near its entrance at the Strait of Hormuz.

This act immediately followed the Shah of Iran's visit to Muscat on 5 December 1977. The PFLO noted that these maneuvers also come when the Arab nation finds itself at a dangerous juncture in its conflict against the racist, Zionist entity (Israel) and US-led world imperialism.

Qabus had already opened the gates of Oman to the Iranian invaders and subjected the entire region to the danger of Iranian expansionism. Now

he loyally serves the Shah's expansionist greed by provocatively sending the Sultanate's troops to the borders of the Emirate.

Qabus has two main objectives. First, Iran wants complete control over the strategically important positions adjacent to the Strait of Hormuz. Second, huge quantities of oil have recently been discovered in Ras al-Khaimah. It is quite clear that Qabus, whose only evidence of his sovereignty are his anthem and flag, would not dare to act in this manner without the encouragement of the Shah and the blessing of the US.

The PFLO summarized its stand in the following three points:

1. The PFLO reaffirms its belief in the unity of natural Oman which is made up of the Sultanate and the United Arab Emirates. Reunification is one of the first tasks of the PFLO's

political program and one of the dearest hopes of the Omani people. However, the reunification of Oman must be achieved by peaceful means through democratic popular vote and not by force or the threat of force.

2. The present military maneuvers of Qabus' regime are in fact part of a British-Iranian conspiracy encouraged by the US. Qabus is no more than their agent regardless of his slogans or actions.

3. The PFLO opposes Qabus military maneuvers and his use of force to unite the homeland or to annex any part of it. The territorial integrity of the state of the United Arab Emirates must be preserved until the Sultanate of Oman is entirely liberated from all foreign military bases, from the Iranian invasion forces, and from the traitorous rule of the al-Busaid family of Sultan Qabus.

## Continued from page 2

Democratic Yemen are infantry and special forces known as the Imperial Iranian Task Force. These forces, thousands in number, constitute the Damavand Line which stretches from the village of Rakhyout in the South by the sea to Hairon in the North.

Several air defense batteries are based along the border with Democratic Yemen at Thamreet, Sarfeet, Makinat Shahn, and Hebroot as well as at Sallalah and at three radar bases. Iranian Phantom jets often land at Thamreet air base but return from time to time to Tehran via Masirah after reconnaissance flights over the Yemeni border. The Iranians also have C-130 transports and helicopters. Iranian land and air forces are also based on Omani territory near the Strait of Hormuz (the entrance to the Gulf), where there are no Omani forces, at Ras Massendam, and Um-al-Ghanam island.

A large number of Jordanian intelligence officers train both civilian and military intelligence personnel in the Sultan's army. They are responsible for torture of political detainees held in Jallali and Ramees prisons. Others train the army using methods of the Jordanian royal army. A Jordanian engineering battalion works in the southern area; its task is to plant mines, clear areas of mines, build roads, and train the Omani engineering battalion.

## THE REVOLUTION CONTINUES

The present form of mobilization of these military forces in Oman is the clearest proof that Sultan Qabus and the Shah are lying about the "defeat" of the Omani revolution. The present posture of the British, Iranian, Omani, and other forces is based on the imminent resumption of fullscale military activities by the PFLO. Soldiers are told to be ready for combat, perhaps of a different kind than before. They are told by their British advisors that most of the people sympathize with the revolution and so should be considered enemies.

A PFLO campaign of military operations in June of 1977 (in Central and Eastern Dhofar) showed that the revolution will not go away but will remain until victory.



## EVICTION:

### OMANI STYLE

The brutality of the Omani regime was again revealed in September, 1977, when an official decree was issued calling for the expulsion of some citizens from their homes in Sallalah. The government claimed it needed the land for an airport and government buildings.

The police and army cordoned off the houses in question and forced the citizens to leave their homes. Hundreds of families were stranded in the streets of Sallalah without shelter. Finally the citizens were dumped east of Sallalah where they will be permitted to rebuild at their own expense. The authorities refused to pay for building new houses.

These citizens had previously been forced to leave their original homes in the countryside as a result of the blockade imposed by the regime which, combined with a policy of burning houses and killing cattle, caused widespread starvation.

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# YEMEN AND OMAN

## A BRIEF HISTORY

### PART II: NORTH YEMEN—COUP, REPUBLIC, AND CIVIL WAR

Less than twenty years ago, a visitor to North Yemen returned to the 13th century. The Yemeni people were locked into a network of terror and merciless repression. The Imam (originally a religious leader who took political power as well) finally took power from the occupying Turks after World War I and spent the following decade consolidating his rule through bribes to tribal leaders, a system of hostages, and fierce military campaigns.

The Imam's strategy to hold power was simple and effective. He banned nearly all forms of outside contact. In the 1930's, he sent a few military students for training in Iraq but soon discontinued the practice when the students returned hostile to his backward regime. Although he promptly jailed most of them, these officers became an important nucleus within the national struggle against the Imamate during the ensuing quarter century.

Because of the isolation of North Yemen and its poor colonial potential, western imperialism bypassed it when they carved the world into spheres of control. Yemeni merchants were forced into self-exile in the British colony of Aden in order to pursue their commercial activities free from medieval restrictions. And the Imam's policies made it impossible for them to convert their mercantile capital into industrial capital because it was illegal to build factories.

As in most other parts of the Arab world, the petty bourgeoisie—the merchant class—thus initiated the movement against feudal rule. Over the years from 1948 to 1962, a series of attempts to remove the Imam and form a modern republic occurred. In 1948, the rebels succeeded in assassinating the Imam but his son took control and executed all participants in the uprising.

### REPUBLIC AND CIVIL WAR

Finally, in 1962, following the death of the second Imam, nationalist military officers, influenced by their Egyptian advisors, succeeded in overthrowing the Imamate and proclaiming a republic. The new Imam escaped, however, and organized a royalist army among the tribes of the northern mountains with Saudi support. A long civil war began in North Yemen.

The Republican forces included the standing army and the merchant class. Initially, they had wide support from large sectors of the mainly peasant population but instead of relying on the people and organizing them, the leadership called on President Nasser of Egypt for support.

The royalists were led by the Imam who was backed by the largest landowners and some traditional tribal leaders. The latter, however, periodically changed sides during the war depending on who had paid them the largest bribe.

President Nasser was only too willing to apply his strategy of "revolution from above" to Yemen. By 1964, Egyptian troops, who numbered 70,000 at the high point of Egyptian involvement, had taken most major cities but their unfamiliarity with the mountainous Yemeni terrain prevented them from wiping out the royalist forces.

The Egyptian intervention effectively prevented the growth of a Yemeni army and made the Republic totally dependent on Egypt. Many Yemenis who actually supported the Republic were alienated by Egyptian arrogance and the revolution lost considerable support.

The Republican forces soon split into two factions. One faction was made up of pro-Nasserist forces based in the Army. They led the abolition of slavery and the confiscation of royal property which included one-third of the country's productive land. Factories were legalized and measures were instituted to attract foreign investment capital. But they also took a clear anti-imperialist stance and were not interested in becoming local representatives of the imperialist powers.

The commercial bourgeoisie organized a second faction which later took in many traditional tribal chiefs. The policies of the Nasserists strengthened the rising bourgeoisie which therefore played an increasingly decisive role in the Republican government. Thus, just as in Egypt itself, the policies of Nasser paved the way to power for the opponents of Nasserism.

By 1967, Egypt's overextension in Yemen was tragically demonstrated when the Egyptian army lost the six day war with Israel. Saudi Arabia used this opportunity to force Egyptian agreement to a settlement of the civil war which brought a coalition of royalists and merchants to power. This coalition still rules today and has begun the transformation of North Yemen, known

as the Arab Republic of Yemen, into a neocolony of imperialism.

Nevertheless, in assessing the civil war period and the Egyptian intervention, we should recall that they irrevocably shattered the frozen, decadent social structure. The prolonged period of struggle also had an incubating effect which led to the development of a mature left popular force in Yemen which was able to go beyond Nasserism to develop a revolutionary strategy which spread to South Yemen and Oman.

### THE YEMENI LEFT

In late 1967, the royalist forces began a 70-day siege of the Republican capitol. The Republican government fled but the successful defense of the city was organized by the Popular Resistance Force (PRF) which was an organization of peasants and the newly-emergent urban working class.

In the meantime, the new coalition government was building up its army. In a decisive battle for a shipment of Soviet arms, the government took the offensive against the PRF. The government's victory led to a concerted campaign to crush the Left and purge it from the army. The Left was unprepared and had no strategy for self-defense. Driven underground, they organized what is today the Organization of Yemeni Resisters based on Marxism-Leninism, support for the revolutionary government in Democratic Yemen, and armed struggle against the ruling group in North Yemen.

Armed struggle has spread since that time, and North Yemen once again fights a civil war. But this time the decisive factor will not be Egyptian or Saudi intervention. The people of Yemen have awakened and are organizing themselves to fight for freedom from all forms of exploitation and foreign domination. The victory of the revolution in North Yemen will then be the basis for full reunification of North and South Yemen in a socialist state.

*After this series we will publish a follow-up article updating events in North Yemen.* ●



## PFLO AND WORLD AFFAIRS

The PFLO considers itself part of the Arab liberation movement and part of progressive forces in the world. Periodically the Front publishes its own analyses of events and issues statements of support. Recently the PFLO called for a halt to the repression in Thailand and condemned French aggression against the Saharan people.

Messages of congratulations were sent in honor of the following occasions: national day of Vietnam, outbreak of armed struggle in Democratic Yemen, the 60th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution in the Soviet Union, the re-election of Kim il-Sung in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the 19th anniversary of the Cuban Communist Party, the 23rd anniversary of the Algerian revolution, and the 13th anniversary of the armed struggle in Palestine. In the last case, the PFLO expressed its support for the PLO and supported its rejection of UN resolution 242 and the Geneva conference.

In October, the PFLO participated in an international conference on Palestine held in Paris. The PFLO called for a broad Arab progressive front to oppose the initiatives symbolized by Anwar Sadat's visit to Israel. The PFLO strongly condemned Sadat's traitorous act. At the conference the PFLO played a major role in establishing the link between Iran and Israel in the strategy of US imperialism to control the entire region. The PFLO also participated in the Tripoli conference following Sadat's trip and fully supports the results, especially the higher unity of the Palestinian movement.

The First Congress of the Omani Youth Organization was held in Democratic Yemen from the 25th to the 28th of December 1977. The theme of the congress was to struggle for the formation of a united, democratic, Omani youth movement. Youth organizations

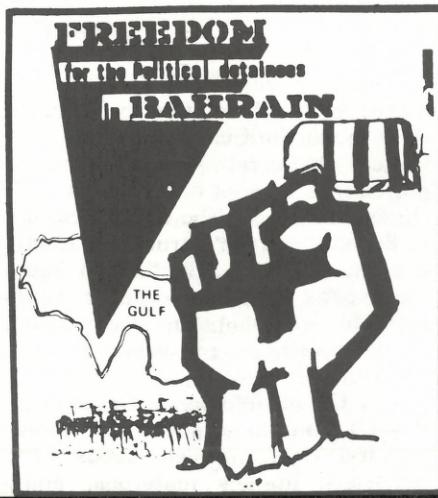
attended from Vietnam, the Soviet Union, Democratic Yemen, Iraq, Libya, Polisario, and East Germany. The National Union of Bahraini Students, the National Union of Omani Students, and the Omani Red Crescent also attended. Telegrams were received from the World Federation of Democratic Youth and youth organizations in Syria and Algeria.

### PFLO CONCERNED ABOUT HORN

In a January editorial the PFLO analyzed events in the Horn of Africa. Their focus is on a visit by Somali President Siad Barre to Iran where he spoke of a US moral obligation to intervene in support of Somalia. The Shah soon afterward announced that he would not stand by and ignore threats to Somalia. The following is our translation of most of the PFLO statement from Arabic:

"The two statements are a clear indication of the aims of the visit. We believe this step on the part of Somalia goes along with US strategy, particularly planned security pacts for that part of the Indian Ocean and for the strategic waterways leading into it, i.e. the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab al-Mandeb. The Somali moves also accommodate the expansionist aspirations of the Shah who considers the Red Sea within the security radius for the oil shipping lanes he is delegated to protect.

"We oppose the continuation of the war between Somalia and Ethiopia and call for the resolution of the problem by peaceful means which take into account the owners of the land. However in light of the latest Somali moves, particularly their call for US and Iranian intervention in this sensitive region of the world, we find such maneuvers on the part of Somalia expose the security and peace of the region as a whole to grave dangers." ●



## BAHRAINI STUDENTS UNDER ATTACK

February 25, 1978 was the sixth anniversary of the founding of the National Union of Bahraini Students (NUBS). The Union's founding followed many years of struggle by Bahraini students against the repression of the regime and imperialist domination of their country.

Since its foundation, NUBS increasingly rallied students to action, achieved victories against the regime, exposed the regime's ties with imperialism and other Arab reactionaries, and built support for the Bahraini struggle among Arab and international student organizations.

Because of these achievements, amidst the continuing repressive policies of the regime against the workers' and students' movements, two activists, Mohammad Ghalloum and Said Al-Ouweinati, were murdered under torture. The regime's repression has further intensified since the summer of 1976 when the summer activities of NUBS were prohibited. NUBS had imposed these activities on the regime with massive support.

But these events were only the beginning. The regime followed with a massive campaign of arrests and torture of NUBS members and other activists. Repression also extended to NUBS members studying outside the country (Bahrain has no university). First, under the direction of Bahraini intelligence, the regime started its own student clubs in Cairo, Alexandria, and Kuwait to try to undermine the success of NUBS. These clubs were provided with huge amounts of money and other support. Second, the regime stopped 212 students from returning to their studies abroad by impounding their passports. Third, the regime passed a new law applying only to students which requires them to renew passports every year.

Other Arab regimes have cooperated; the most recent example is the deportation of Issa Malakeh, a NUBS leader, by Egyptian authorities. He was immediately arrested upon arrival in Bahrain.

NUBS calls on all progressive organizations and individuals to condemn the regime's acts and demand the release of Issa Malakeh and all other political prisoners in Bahrain. The 212 students must be allowed to continue their studies. NUBS already has the support of many Arab and international student organizations and conferences. You can show your support by sending the above demands to: State of Bahrain, Ministers Council, Manama, BAHRAIN.



# NEWS BRIEFS

## CARTER'S "DEFENSIVE" STRATEGY FOR THE GULF

Recently US President Carter revealed his strategic plan for the Gulf which involves the expansion of US "defensive" measures to protect the Gulf region, particularly Iran, from external aggression. This new plan marks the intensification of imperialism's determination to maintain control of the region and to continue to control its resources and plunder its wealth. The danger of a US invasion has increased along with the ability of the Carter administration to "justify" such measures.

The US and other imperialist powers already exercise neocolonial hegemony over the Gulf region which suffers under the yoke of their multinational monopolies, naval fleets, and other military forces and bases scattered provocatively throughout the Gulf. What the new plans signify, however, is US preparedness for direct intervention which it has avoided since the early seventies.

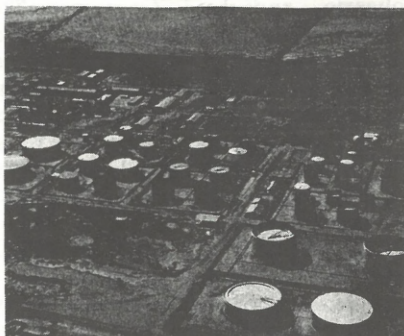
This threat is primarily directed against the people of the region and their revolutionary forces who constitute the basic danger threatening imperialist interests. But talk of direct intervention is also a subtle threat aimed at the kings, shahs, sultans, and sheikhs already tightly bound to Washington. These rulers dare not make unilateral decisions that could endanger US strategy. The basis of this hidden threat is US concern about the repetition of acts like the 1973 oil embargo imposed under mass pressure during the October War. Though that embargo was of only limited effectiveness, because of the sabotage of the reactionary regimes, its political significance was not lost on the US.

Increasingly the US relies on Iran to pull its irons from the fire. All talk of "human rights" is silenced when it comes time to praise the Shah's fascist and expansionist policies. Carter's "defensive" strategy promises to lead the US into another Indochinese-type situation in which US forces will eventually be needed to fight revolutionary forces in Iran and throughout the Arabian Gulf and Peninsula. ●

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## SAUDI-OMAN TIES

The PFLO reports secret talks between Saudi Arabia and the Sultan's regime in Muscat. Saudi Arabia wants a right-of-way to build a pipeline from its oilfields in Shuaibah through Dhofar



*Saudi Arabia, one of the world's leading producers of oil*

to the coast. In return, Oman would get several hundred million dollars of "Development" aid. The agreement would last for 99 years during which time sovereignty over the right-of-way would belong to Saudi Arabia.

The PFLO believes the talks are almost complete though the question of sovereignty is still unresolved. But since the sovereignty of Sultan Qabus is already non-existent, the PFLO is confident that an agreement will be concluded unless Britain, the US, or Iran decide to interfere. The PFLO made it clear that Saudi Arabia would have to send its armed forces to Oman to fight the Omani people if the deal goes through.

Since the pipeline would make the Saudis less dependent on Iran and its control over the entrance to the Gulf, it would shift the balance of power between Iran and Saudi Arabia. PFLO does not believe their conflicts will break out into open warfare. However, the pipeline provides a pretext for Saudi Arabia to replace Iranian troops with Arabs in confronting the Omani revolution. Saut al-Thawra, November 1977. ●

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## MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR OMAN

Comrades from KROAG (The Committee for the Revolution in Oman and the Arabian Gulf in Denmark) recently visited Democratic Yemen and reported on a number of the needs of the Omani revolution. The PFLO's Schools of Revolution need a truck; an electric generator; sound amplification equipment; pens, pencils, and paper; equipment for workshops in woodworking, metal working, and electrical work; films and slides.

The Omani Women's Organization (OWO) plans to establish a Women's Cultural Center which needs office materials, literacy materials, equip-

ment and supplies for a maternity and children's welfare clinic, a bus for their child care center, children's clothes and toys, milk powder, refrigerators, a film projector, films, typewriters, and a variety of sound equipment. For its other work the OWO needs money as well. KROAG reports that the work of the OWO is given high priority by the PFLO because the women's organization is starting to build up its activities almost from scratch. Donations of funds or inquiries about support work can be channeled through Gulf Solidarity.

In September, PFLO reported the receipt by the Omani Red Crescent of a large quantity of medicine, clothing, and food sent by the Emmaus Frysinge (Sweden) and Danish Emmaus groups. KROAG sent about \$2000 worth of medicine to the Fatimah Ghana Hospital. The hospital also received two electrical generators valued at about \$6000 from Danish Emmaus. ●



The PFLO needs your support.  
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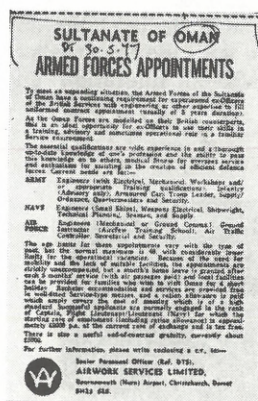
People's Democratic Republic of Yemen



## BOOK REVIEW

FRED HALLIDAY, *Mercenaries "Counter-Insurgency" in the Gulf*, Spokesman Books, 1977, 80 pp., 95p.

Fred Halliday's new book is actually a reprint of an article published in *Gulf Studies* #1 with some new material added. The book is more than a study of British mercenaries; Halliday tries to analyze prospects for guerrilla wars of the future and the corresponding strategies of counter-insurgency used against them by imperialist powers. It is natural that Halliday focuses on the war in Oman; he has visited Oman on more than one occasion and written extensively on the revolution there. His book, *Arabia Without Sultans*, is the best available political history of the Arabian Peninsula.



A reduced reproduction of the advertisement that appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, 30 May 1977

Halliday performs a useful service by bringing together a mass of information in one place and by attempting to analyze its significance. The focus is mainly on Great Britain as the imperialist power, both because Halliday is British and because Britain is the primary visible power in Oman. But though he is writing for a primarily British audience, Halliday also documents the growing US role, both direct and through Iran.

The main criticism which can legitimately be raised about this book is Halliday's unwarranted pessimism. As we state in our editorial in this issue, revolution is a process. Advances in the technology of repression have little prospect in the long run of outweighing corresponding advances in the ability of oppressed people to organize themselves for liberation in struggles for national liberation and with ties of international solidarity.

Halliday's pessimism leads him to distort somewhat the existing situation in Oman as well as in East Timor, for instance. Halliday continually uses the past tense in speaking of these struggles. He describes them as having been crushed, i.e. over. Yet the revolution in Oman cannot be said to be "over" so

## PROFILE OF A DEFECTOR

Occasionally reports circulate about defectors from the Omani revolution who have joined the regime of Sultan Qabus. So that these defectors do not remain mere abstractions, we should like to tell you about one of them: Youssef al-Alawi.

Youssef al-Alawi was the Cairo representative of the Dhofar liberation front, a separatist forerunner of the PFLO, until 1968. His ambition was to see a state established in Dhofar in which he could get a ministerial position. But after three years in Cairo, his diplomat's life of villas and Mercedes cars, purchased with funds stolen from the revolution, made him forget the oppression and suffering of the Omani people.

In September 1968 the historic Hamrain congress changed the course of the revolution, abandoned the Dhofari separatist aims in favor of the liberation of all of Oman, and embraced

socialism. In addition checks by auditors of the congress revealed al-Alawi's embezzlement and he was summoned for interrogation. Is it surprising that he chose that time to announce his differences and leave the ranks of the revolution?

When the British installed Qabus in 1970, al-Alawi was among the first to join the puppet regime. His Dhofari background was particularly useful in view of the enemy's need for local facades. To prove his loyalty, al-Alawi began to attack the revolution.

And where is this upstanding gentleman today? Now he is the Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of the Sultanate of Oman — a fine reward for exemplary treason. Al-Alawi can be heard representing the Sultanate before the UN General Assembly, defending the "sovereignty" of Oman. With such termites in the woodwork, is it any wonder that the Sultan's regime cannot stand on its own?

## RESOURCES

Some issues of *Gulf Solidarity*, published in our old format, are still available at \$1.00 each. Available issues include: Volume I, no. 3-4, February-March 1973, contains a still useful 20-page article on the Nixon Doctrine in the Gulf; Volume I, no. 5, April-May 1973, a variety of news from Iran, Oman, Bahrain, and Kuwait; Volume I, no. 6, June 1973, first congress of PFLO support committees; Volume II, no. 3, February 1974, features Iranian invasion of Oman; Volume II, no. 4, May 1974, features workers' movements in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia;

and Volume III, no. 1-2, Spring 1975, the US moves into the Gulf. Issues number 1 and 2 of our present format, both dated 1977, are still available at \$.50 each.

Our readers may be interested in a small newsletter on Oman published in Denmark by the Committee for the Revolution in Oman and the Arabian Gulf (KROAG). *Dhofar Letter* comes out about 10 times a year in English. Airmail subscriptions cost \$6 per year. Send an international postal money order to KROAG, Box 86, DK-1003, Copenhagen K, DENMARK.

long as a revolutionary organization exists with a viable strategy of struggle, significant support, and a regular practice. In East Timor, FRETLIN reports the situation is quite favorable for its forces and Halliday's use of this struggle as an example of the growing futility of guerrilla war is surprising indeed.

But there is another level in which Halliday's pessimism leads him astray.



On his balance sheet of Britain's colonial wars, what he calls Oman II — the revolution which began in 1965 — is tallied as a victory for Britain. But actually Britain failed to quell the Omani revolution despite sophisticated tactics. Why else did Iran have to invade?

We recommend *Mercenaries* to those who want more information on Oman. But we also recommend caution in interpreting its conclusions.



Iran...

Continued from page 1

Shantytown dwellers fought the Shah's police when they came to bulldoze their homes. Many were injured and some martyred. On one occasion they took the offensive and attacked the Tehran 6th district municipal headquarters, broke all its windows, and burned municipal cars. Sixteen people drew two-year prison terms.

Armed actions supported these struggles. On 2 December 1977, the OIPFG (Organization of Iranian People's Fedayeen Guerrillas) bombed the municipal headquarters of the 12th district (Ray City) and completely destroyed it. The OIPFG also distributed leaflets exposing the Shah's dictatorial regime and its imperialist masters, headed by the US.

Another wave of mass protest began on 15 November 1977 when the Shah visited his boss, President Jimmy Carter. While several thousand Iranian students and American supporters demonstrated in Washington, D.C., ten thousand Iranian students and people from all walks of life joined in a militant demonstration in the city of Tehran. Slogans called for the overthrow of the Shah's regime and support for the armed revolutionary organizations. Windows of many banks and foreign-owned companies were broken.

The Tehran demonstration was followed by massive actions in Shiraz, Isfahan, and many other cities. The Shah's soldiers and secret police, dressed in plain clothes and carrying automatic weapons, attacked the demonstrators, killed some, and arrested more. "Witnesses said it was the most violent assault on a student demonstration in years." (Guardian, 30 November 1977)

### CARTER IN IRAN

Most colleges and universities were shut down following the demonstrations which once again proved the reactionary nature of the Shah's regime and exposed Carter's "human rights" campaign. Carter's visit to Iran met with chants of "Yankee go home!"

Jordanian King Hussein joined the Shah and Mr. "Human Rights" signifying that the visit was intended to plan strategy to thwart the just struggles of the peoples of the Middle East. According to the New York Times Magazine (9 January 1978), "On the way to the city, they drove along roads that were lined with more security men than well-wishers." However the extreme security was unable to prevent the people's opposition from asserting itself.

OIPFG successfully planted a bomb at the US "Cultural Center" on the night of 28 December 1977. The building was heavily damaged. Soon thereafter several hundred people demonstrated in different parts of Tehran. At the universities demonstrators carried signs proclaiming "Down With Imperialism" and chanted "Yankee Go Home" and "Death to the Shah." They were hustled into police vans and off to jail.

Two weeks after Carter left Iran, large and militant demonstrations erupted in the religious city of Qum, south of Tehran. Many people were gunned down; more were arrested and are now being tortured.

### TABRIZ REVOLT

The highpoint of the wave of demonstrations came in the city of Tabriz on 18 February 1978. This uprising, protesting massacres in Qum and the exploitation and oppression of the Iranian people, lasted for over five days. The people of Tabriz marched to the chant, "Down With the Shah." They destroyed 73 banks and the headquarters of the fascist "Resurrection" Party and of Savak, the Shah's secret police. In addition the demonstrators burned down four hotels, three cinemas, many government vehicles, and police stations.

The Shah's police and army attacked the people with machine guns and tanks. Martial law was declared in Tabriz. Hundreds of men and women, young and old, were ruthlessly massacred. According to the regime's own newspaper, Kayhan International (1 March 1978), 608 people were arrested on various charges, including membership in revolutionary organizations, and now face torture. Hospitals quickly filled with casualties of the Tabriz shootings.

After the Tabriz uprising, supportive demonstrations were held in such cities as Ardabil and Tehran where university students staged militant demonstrations.

The demonstrations and uprisings of the past few months reveal a growing mass movement. The protracted nature of these protests and the willingness of the people to use revolutionary violence against the armed suppression of the regime are important new features of the last few months. The day is not far off when the anger of the people will be organized by the vanguard armed movement to overthrow the Shah's regime and end imperialist domination over Iran.

Editorial . . .

Continued from page 1

The social basis of Omani society has been transformed by the Iranian invasion, by the expanded repressive apparatus, and, most of all, by neocolonial economic "development." New classes have appeared and the ability of the state to influence previously isolated Omani tribespeople has greatly increased.

The PFLO has reformulated its strategy to meet these changed conditions. And the Omani people display great determination to continue the fight. Danish comrades, during a recent visit to the region of Democratic Yemen adjacent to Oman, found spirits high adjacent to Oman, found spirits high and expectations realistic among Omani refugees and fighters.

The tide will rise again in Oman and the Omani people will ride the crests of the wave to national liberation and freedom.

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